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For Immediate Release

ADVICE, TREATMENT OPTIONS AND HOPE OFFERED AT RIPPEL CENTER'S BREAST CANCER SURVIVORSHIP CONFERENCE

MORRISTOWN, NJ NOVEMBER 14, 2007 – The [Carol G. Simon Cancer Center's Carol W. and Julius A. Rippe Breast Center](#) at Morristown Memorial Hospital gave visitors a look at the forefront of overcoming the disease and leading healthy, productive lives, at the breast center's first annual Breast Cancer Survivorship Conference.

Experts from the Rippe Breast Center discussed the latest devices used to detect breast cancer, treatment and surgical options, and advice on how to live with the disease after treatment at the conference titled, "Discovering the New Me," which drew an audience of more than 150 people including breast cancer survivors, nurses, physicians and technologists to the the hospital on October 26, 2007. The conference was sponsored by the Rippe Breast Center and the New Jersey Cancer Education and Early Detection program (NJCEED) at Morristown Memorial Hospital.

An estimated 240,510 new cases of breast cancer were expected in the United States in 2007. As the most frequent non-skin cancer in women, it is estimated that 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime.

However, survivorship has improved over time, with national mortality rates declining at a rate of 1.4 percent per year from 1989-1995, and 3.2 percent per year since then. According to the American Cancer Society, these decreases are likely the result of both earlier detection and improved treatment. Of the more than 10.5 million people living with cancer in the United States, 20 percent are breast cancer survivors. More than 80 percent of early stage breast cancer patients will be long-term survivors.

Paul Friedman, DO, Medical Director of the Carol W. and Julius A. Rippe Breast Center at Carol G. Simon Cancer Center, emphasized that early detection was vital to battling the disease. Friedman discussed a number of detection methods, ranging from self-detection that women can do on their own, to mammography and new, high-tech procedures that are available at Carol G. Simon Cancer Center, including All Digital Mammography- Screening and Diagnostic, Diagnostic Ultrasound, Breast MRI, Full Service Breast Intervention- Stereotactic Biopsy, Ultrasound Core Biopsy and MRI Guided Procedures.

Also featured at the conference, were presentations by Leah Gendler MD, a surgeon and breast specialist at Carol G. Simon Cancer Center, on mastectomies and the role of the surgeon in follow-up care; David Gallinson DO, a hematologist oncologist at Morristown Memorial Hospital, on the role of an oncologist in follow-up care and how often patients should follow up on tests; Brian S. Glatt MD, on breast reconstruction techniques, Patricia Robinson MD, on sexuality, intimacy and self-image during and after cancer treatment; Jason S. Levitz MD, a hematologist oncologist at Morristown Memorial

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Hospital, on issues related to pregnancy and chemotherapy; Mary-Giselle Ulbrich MS, RD, on nutrition during and after breast cancer treatment; and Kathryn A. Ryans, MS, PT, CLT-LANA on the development of lymphedema its prevention and care.

Continuing Process

Catherine F. Owens, LCSW, a licensed clinical social worker at Carol G. Simon Cancer Center, discussed the stages of survival, as well as factors for women to consider in regaining a sense of normalcy after cancer diagnosis and treatment.

“Survival is a continuous process of getting diagnosed, moving toward the need for less treatment and going on with one’s life,” Owens said.

Owens said that while some breast cancer survivors struggle to accept that they have survived the disease, others look upon the experience of dealing with breast cancer as an opportunity to look at life in a new way.

“Many people come back to us and say ‘I’ve learned to appreciate things more,’ ‘I’ve learned not to take things for granted,’” Owens said.

Owens said that the key to living a life after breast cancer diagnosis and treatment is adapting to the changes from the experience. For doctors and other healthcare providers, that means making survivorship a part of the discussion with patients from the outset of diagnosis, and continue to include it in communication, education and planning with the patient. For survivors, it means being an active participant in their own healthcare, keeping careful records, eating well and exercising, ask questions about follow-up care, support groups and integrative medicine, Owens said.

Brian S. Glatt MD, a plastic surgeon at Morristown Memorial Hospital and Overlook Hospital, said that 50-75 percent of mastectomy patients choose to have breast reconstruction, either immediately after their mastectomies, or some time after. Breast reconstructions are federally mandated to be covered by insurance, Glatt reminded the audience.

“It’s not scar-free. You need to look good in a bra and in a bathing suit,” Dr. Glatt said. “You need to have some realistic expectations, but you also need to go on with your life.”

Occurring in approximately 1 of every 3,000 pregnant women, breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosis in that group, said Jason S. Levitz, MD. Pregnant women who seek detection of breast cancer can choose mammograms or ultrasound procedures. With proper shielding, mammography poses little risk of radiation exposure to the developing baby. Since at least 25 percent of mammograms in pregnancy may be negative even in the presence of breast cancer, a biopsy is essential for the diagnosis of an abnormal mass in the breast.

“This is a safe procedure for pregnant women to undergo,” Levitz said.

Survival at different stages

Survivors at the conference ranged from those who have survived the disease for decades to others who are in the early years of survival.

Cindi Kline, a four year survivor from Warren, who had a bilateral mastectomy, said she has become an advocate for survivorship.

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"There's life after all of this," Kline said to Cynthia Washburn, a survivor from Flanders.

"I like to hear that," replied Washburn, who recently completed chemotherapy at Carol G. Simon Cancer Center, said she came to the conference because she wanted to hear about what is on the forefront of treatment and survival.

"What this confirmed for me was that I was getting the very best care here, and that gave me a great deal of reassurance," Washburn said.

Washburn said that she was able to keep an upbeat outlook on the experience most of the time, and said she found an abundance of support from volunteers at the hospital and from other cancer survivors.

"I've found that people are so willing to help others, and I'd like to reach out in the same way," Washburn said.

Care and outreach were invaluable to Betty Eagles, a breast cancer survivor from Oak Ridge who, through the cancer center, received assistance through the New Jersey Cancer Education and Early Detection program (NJCEED), which helps low income, uninsured, underinsured, and underserved women and men gain access to lifesaving screening programs for the early detection of breast, cervical, colorectal and prostate cancers. Through the program, Eagles, who also cares for her elderly mother, was eligible for Medicaid.

"I know I would not be here without their help," Eagles said.

Despite programs like NJCEED to assist women in getting mammograms or other forms of detection, only 65 percent of American women get routine mammograms. That may be due to several barriers to getting care that women must overcome, ranging from fear, race, religion, education, economic status, or lack of health insurance said Aaron H. Chevinsky, MD, FACS, Chief of Surgical Oncology and Co-Director, Carol G. Simon Cancer Center. Regardless of the factors, Chevinsky stressed that early detection is the key to survival.

About the Carol W. and Julius A. Rippel Breast Center

Morristown Memorial Hospital's Carol W. and Julius A. Rippel Breast Center was established in 2005 to meet the growing need for breast services in the region. The Rippel Breast Center provides digital mammography and computer assisted detection (CAD), breast MRI with CAD, MRI-guided and stereotactic breast biopsy, ultrasound, biotherapy, hormone therapy, MammoSite seed radiation and genetic counseling for risk assessment, just to name a few of its specialized services. The physicians of the Rippel Breast Center specialize in the evaluation and management of abnormalities of the breast, including pre-cancerous and cancerous conditions. A multidisciplinary team of physicians and nurses familiar with all aspects of breast disease participate in evaluation and treatment planning. The team approach includes participation by the patient and family, as well as the primary care and consulting physicians. The Rippel Breast Center has resulted in improved coordinated and time-sensitive care.

Associated services are available in patient education and patient support. In addition to the availability of individual and family counseling, a variety of support groups meet on a regular basis, including I Can Cope; Look Good, Feel Better; and the Breast Support Group. For more information, or to make an appointment at the Rippel Breast Center, call 973-971-5231.

About the Carol G. Simon Cancer Center

Morristown Memorial Hospital's Carol G. Simon Cancer Center offers the region's largest staff of cancer specialists and the most advanced methods to diagnose, treat and manage all types of cancer. All members of its multi-disciplinary care

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teams have been specially selected and trained to provide the highest level of care for both the physical and emotional needs of its patients. Integrating traditional and complementary medical modalities, the Carol G. Simon Cancer Center provides inpatient, outpatient, home care, support services, and preventive screenings. All of these services are conveniently offered at Morristown Memorial Hospital—allowing the cancer patient and care giver to remain within the community, close to family and friends.

Part of the Atlantic Health, atlanticealth.org, Morristown Memorial is a non-profit 629-licensed-bed hospital in Morristown, New Jersey. Morristown Memorial's specialties include cardiology and cardiac surgery, adult and pediatric oncology, critical and emergency care and inpatient rehabilitation and neonatal intensive care services. The hospital is accredited by The Joint Commission. Atlantic Health is the primary academic and clinical affiliate in New Jersey of Mount Sinai School of Medicine and The Mount Sinai Hospital.

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